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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/737,489

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Harutaka Eguchi

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01/16/2004

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EXAMINER

SANTIAGO, ENRIQUE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2671

DATE MAILED: 01/16/2004

9

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/737,489

Applicant(s)

EGUCHI, HARUTAKA

Examiner

Enrique L Santiago

Art Unit

2671

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 10-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 10-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cullen et al.
US patent no. 5,732,230 in view of Seto et al. US patent no. 5,627,651.

-Regarding claim 10, Cullen et al. teaches an image processing system comprising: a plurality of unit storage areas (see column 9, lines 36-39, system memory 16, fixed disk 32 and virtual memory) processing target images (see figs. 1 and 2, column 3, line 54-58, column 4, lines 6-8); and a control unit controlling an access to each of the unit storage areas (see figs. 1 and 3, column 5, lines 10-22), wherein said control unit stores the processing target unit images in said plurality of unit storage areas (see figs. 1 and 3, column 5, lines 10-22, column 9, lines 36-39), accesses said unit storage areas in a predetermined sequence, and thereby generates a composite image from the unit images (see figs. 1 and 3, column 5, lines 10-22, column 6, line 51-column 7, line 51).

Cullen et al. does not directly teach vacant unit storage areas arranged in a matrix to have images inserted. However in similar art Seto et al. teaches said limitation (see figs. 5-7, column 4, lines 6-8). Therefore it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to use said system, because it would be used to store the image data (see column 9, lines 64-65).

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-Regarding claim 11, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing comprising: unit storage areas having different capacities (see fig 1, column 9, lines 36-39, system memory 16, fixed disk 32 and virtual memory), wherein the composite image is composed of the unit images having different dimensions (see figs. 7-10, column 9, lines 3-39).

-Regarding claim 12, Cullen et al. teaches an image processing system comprising: a display unit 24 (see fig. 1, column 3, lines 4-24) displaying on a screen a composite area as an aggregation of unit areas into which images are insertable (see figs. 3 and 5-10, column 3, lines 4-24); and an operation unit inserting a processing target image into the unit area within the composite area (see fig 3 column 6, line 51-column 7, line 4, column 7, lines 39-51).

-Regarding claim 13, Cullen et al. teaches a storage medium including instructions for: displaying a composite area as an aggregation of unit areas into which images are insertable (see figs. 3 and 5-10, column 3, lines 4-24, column 5, lines 10-22); detecting an indication of a processing target image (see fig. 3, column 3, lines 4-25); detecting a transfer of the indicated image (see fig. 3, column 3, lines 4-25); and inserting the indicated image into a transfer destination unit area (see fig. 3, column 3, lines 4-25).

-Regarding claim 14, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein dimensions of the blocks are specified irrespective of dimensions of the processing target image (see the abstract, fig. 3, column 5, lines 23-51), and the processing target image is adjusted to the dimensions of the block that accepts the inserted image (see the abstract, fig. 3 and 10, column 5, lines 23-51, column 9, lines 65-67).

-Regarding claim 15, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein the number of the unit areas within the composite area can be arbitrarily set (see column 8, lines 34-42, column 11, line 22).

-Regarding claim 16, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein a background color of the blocks can be arbitrarily set (see column 1, lines 24-29, column 8, lines 35-42, column 9, lines 3-10).

-Regarding claim 17, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing wherein a configuration of the blocks is a rectangular shape of which dimensions can be arbitrarily set (see column 8, lines 35-42).

-Regarding claim 18, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein even when the image inserted into the unit area is deleted; an original image of the image inset in the block is not deleted (see column 9, lines 39-55).

-Regarding claim 19, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein dimensions of the composite area can be arbitrarily set (see column 8, lines 35-42, column 11, line 22).

-Regarding claim 20, Cullen et al. further teaches an image processing system wherein the plurality of target images are consecutively inserted into the plurality of unit areas starting from an arbitrarily specified block within the composite area (see the abstract, column 2, line 45-column 3, line 24, column 8, lines 34-54).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

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Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-9 are allowed.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US patent no. 5,636,334: US patent no. 5,861,888: US patent no. 6,031,542: US patent no. 6,268,935.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Enrique L. Santiago whose telephone number is (703) 306-5908. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Zimmerman, can be reached at (703) 305-9798.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

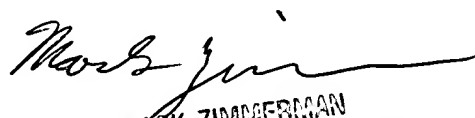
(703) 872-9314 (for Technology Center 2600 only)

Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center 2600 Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

Enrique L. Santiago

January 11, 2004


MARK ZIMMERMAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600